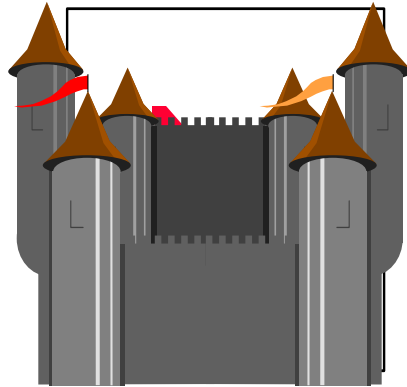


# Parent Handbook



## YMCA Castle Kids Child Development Center

7400 Leake Avenue  
Post Office Box 60267  
New Orleans, LA 70160  
(504) 862-2103

Thank you for choosing the YMCA  
Castle Kids Child Development Center,  
where our commitment is to provide a  
safe, loving, nurturing, and stimulating  
environment for your child.

Roxann B. Parker  
Child Care Director

## **GOALS OF THE YMCA CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

### **1. To support and strengthen the family unit, focusing on:**

- Improving communication among family members
- Strengthening families' sense of community with other families
- Helping families' work and play together
- Supporting families' efforts to build good values in children

### **2. To help children develop to their fullest potential, focusing on:**

- Self-awareness, self-confidence and feelings of self-worth
- Interpersonal relationships
- Values development
- Physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth
- Health and nutrition

### **3. To deliver child care in a safe, caring, positive environment, focusing on:**

- Making sure that all children are safe and happy
- Broadening children's and parents understanding of their community, country, and world

### **CENTER OPERATING HOURS**

Center Hours	Monday – Friday	6:30 AM – 6:30 PM
Classroom Hours	Monday – Friday	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Office Hours	Monday – Friday	9:00 AM – 5:30 PM

### **THE CENTER WILL OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:**

New Years	Independence Day
MLK Birthday	Columbus Day
Mardi Gras	Veterans Day
Presidents Day	Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas
Labor Day	

### **PRIMARY FEES**

Registration  
\$15.00 yearly

#### **Weekly Fees:**

Infants	Toddlers	Pre-School (potty trained)
\$135.00	\$125.00	\$120.00

## **YMCA PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

YMCA childcare programs focus on child development and place a high priority on serving the individual needs of the child, the parent, and the family. Standards established through local funding, city and state licensing, and national educational organizations are required and followed.

### **Objectives for Personal and Family Growth**

The YMCA programs are based on the Judeo-Christian concern for human life and are designed to achieve common objectives for the individuals and families involved.

*In all YMCA programs we seek to help individuals and families:*

#### ***Grow Personally . . .***

We encourage people to set personal goals and work toward them through programs structured to help develop healthy self-images.

#### ***Clarify Values . . .***

Programs provide opportunities for reflections on personal values and the relationship between stated values and actual behavior. There is an emphasis on the match of individual values with Christian traditions and beliefs.

#### ***Improve Personal and Family Relationships . . .***

YMCAs help people develop cooperative attitudes and communication skills through programs for individuals and families.

#### ***Appreciate Diversity . . .***

Programs encourage diversity of thought, cultures, religions, and ethnic traditions, leading to communication and understanding among all people.

#### ***Become Better Leaders and Supporters . . .***

In YMCA Programs, shared leadership and support are basic organizational principles, which are taught, practiced, and encouraged.

***Develop Specific Skills . . .***

The development of individual skills is essential in accomplishing personal goals and in improving confidence and self-esteem.

***Have Fun . . .***

Fun, enjoyment, and laughter are essential qualities of all programs and contribute to people feeling good about themselves and the YMCA!

**Objectives for Community Development**

YMCAs participate in community activities and collaborate with others to focus on efforts designed to improve community conditions.

In these programs our objectives are to:

***Provide Equal Access for All / Non –Discrimination Statement . . .***

All members of communities should enjoy equal access to opportunities and resources, YMCAs help to free communities from barriers associated with race, creed, sex, ethnic background, national origin or physical disability.

***Develop Strength Through Cooperation . . .***

YMCAs encourage cooperation as a basic principle for strengthening communities through unified efforts.

***Create a Healthy Environment . . .***

YMCA programs encourage people to improve the physical world in which we live, to advocate changes, which add to the quality of life for all, and to become a significant force for good beyond our walls.

**The YMCA childcare program is consistent with YMCA traditions of working with families and meeting community needs. It is an especially good program vehicle because it is a recognized need by many families of the 1990's and because it responds to children and families at a time when they are very open to growth and development. YMCA childcare can improve the quality of life for *the whole person, the whole family, and the whole community.***

## **DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES**

A major goal of our program for young children is to provide developmentally age appropriate activities. The following outlines the type of curriculum you can expect in the center. These goals apply to children from infancy to school age.

### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

- ◆ Develop vocabulary and an awareness of written language by labeling items the child sees and uses daily.
- ◆ Develop language skills using conversation, books, word games, tape recorders and visual aids.
- ◆ Develop left-to-right sequencing skills through the use of puzzles, games and similar activities.
- ◆ Develop oral and physical self-expression through dramatic play.

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

- ◆ Learn appropriate ways of working and playing with other children and adults.
- ◆ Encourage respect and respect and consideration for others and the environment.
- ◆ Observe and develop an acquaintance with various cultures.

### **MATHEMATICS**

- ◆ Expand math vocabulary.
- ◆ Develop an ability to classify objects.
- ◆ Recognize geometric shapes.
- ◆ Stimulate the ability to understand numbers and quantities.

### **SCIENCE**

- ◆ Develop the five senses.
- ◆ Foster an awareness of plants and animals.
- ◆ Feel free to test ideas.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- ◆ Promote flexibility, coordination, and sense of balance and awareness of space.
- ◆ Develop a skillful use and control of the body.

- ◆ Express emotions through non-violent, physical activities.

## ART

- ◆ Provide opportunities for the development of creativity.
- ◆ Advance the awareness of color and texture through the use of various mediums (paint, crayons, and clay).
- ◆ Increase coordination through cutting, coloring, pasting and painting.

## MUSIC

- ◆ Foster an appreciation of music through songs, records and musical games.
- ◆ Explore movement through creative dance and exercise.



## SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

<b>7:00 – 8:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>8:00 - 9:00 AM</b>	<b>Table Games</b>
<b>9:00 – 9:30 AM</b>	<b>Circle Time:</b> morning greeting, songs, finger plays, and weather report.
<b>9:30 – 9:45 AM</b>	<b>Snack</b>
<b>9:45 – 10:30 AM</b>	<b>Centers:</b> Centers provide learning & play areas by allowing <b>solitary</b> or small group cooperative plays. The teachers manage centers.
<b>10:30 – 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Music/Art</b> <b>Music:</b> Learning the basic elements of music: melody, harmony, mood & tempo through singing, playing instruments, moving and self-expression. <b>Art:</b> Projects using various materials and media.
<b>11:00 – 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Outside Play</b>
<b>11:30 – 2:00 PM</b>	<b>Bathroom, Lunch &amp; Nap</b>
<b>2:00 – 2:30 PM</b>	<b>Snack &amp; Bathroom</b>
<b>2:30 – 3:15 PM</b>	<b>Language Arts:</b> focusing on basic reading & listening concepts.
<b>3:15 – 4:00 PM</b>	<b>Math/Science</b> <b>Math:</b> Learning shapes, sizes, counting numbers, measurements, problem solving. <b>Science:</b> Activities designed to help children learn & investigate.
<b>4:30 – 5:00 PM</b>	<b>Outside Play</b>
<b>5:00 – 6:30 PM</b>	<b>Story Time</b>

## **OPERATION AND PROCEDURES**

### **Age Requirements and Staff Ratio:**

Children must be between the ages of six weeks and 12 years old. Special consideration is given to children of dual and single military families. The staff ratio is shown below:

- 3 Infants per teacher
- 4 Older Infants per teacher
- 6 Young Toddlers per teacher
- 7 Older Toddlers per teacher
- 10 Pre-K per teacher

### **Operating Hours:**

The full-day programs are for infants, young toddlers, older toddlers, and preschool age children. Our operating hours are from 6:30a.m - 6:30p.m. Parents must pick up their children before closing time. Recurring lateness (more than two times in one month) may indicate center-based childcare is not meeting your needs and other childcare arrangements should be considered.

### **Registration:**

Registration form LRA, a combined registration card and medical consent form, must be completed before registering, and a current immunization record is needed.

Please notify the center of any changes in your address, home telephone, work number, place of work, work schedule and emergency telephone numbers. Provide a number where you or another authorized person can be reached in case of an emergency. **Please keep your telephone numbers up to date.**

### **Open Door Policy:**

Parents are always welcome to visit our center at anytime. We encourage your involvement in the Center's programs. Please come and participate in any special activities and feel free to share your talents and family traditions with us. If you have any comments, questions, concerns, or suggestions please drop them in our Parent Suggestion Box located at the front table by the sign in sheets, or feel free to stop in the office at anytime.

### **Daily Admission and Drop – Off Procedures:**

Upon arrival, we ask parents to bring their child into the center each day. It is our policy that children must be brought to the classroom daily by the parent or other designated persons. Parents are responsible for making the child's teacher aware of their arrival to the center, and this can be acknowledged by a verbal conversation, wave or facial expression. We ask parents to do this for the following reasons:

- The caregiver is involved with the group in the room and leaving the group may distract from the activities.
- Parental participation in this activity promotes a feeling in the child that the parents, center, caregiver and child work together, assuring a smooth transition from home to center.
- The few minutes that the parent is in the room give the parent and the caregiving staff an opportunity to discuss special events, the child's activities and behavior and permit the parent to sign the child in and out.
- Reassuring the child of your love and that you will return to pick him/her up at the end of the day. Never sneak out!!! Always say good-bye to the child.

At the end of the day, allow time for the child to clean up after your arrival. Leaving a mess for others to clean is unfair to the other children and caregiving staff. Encouraging your child to assist in cleaning promotes independence and teaches responsibility.

### **Authorized Pick Up:**

We have on file in the office, a copy of the names of the people you have authorized to pick up your child(ren). This list should be kept current and should include only the names of the people you want to have access to your child. Please be sure to call and let us know if someone other than the parents will be picking up your child(ren). If picking up for the first time, the designated person must present a picture I.D.; this is for the protection of our children within the facility.

### **Dismissal Policy:**

We will not be able to care for children in our center if the following occur:

- Continue non-payment of tuition.
- Non-compliance with the policies and procedures of the center.

### **Health Policy**

A child with an elevated temperature or any symptoms of illness or contagious disease will not be admitted to the center. Symptoms of illness, which exclude a child from the center, are fever, vomiting, and signs of pink eye, impetigo, chicken pox and ringworm. If any indication of illness develops after the child has left the center, the child will be removed from group care, and the parents will be contacted. Please remember that a sick child needs special care. The child must be fever free for 24 hours before he/she can return to the center.

***Allergies*** – Inform the caregiving personnel and program director if your child has allergies or sensitivities to any food or drug. Medical documentation is required.

***Medicine*** – Medications may be given by designated center employees, but only under strictly controlled conditions. The parent must complete and sign a medicine dispensation form. Only medications prescribed by a doctor may be administered.

### **Illness Exclusion/Infectious Disease Policy**

Many illnesses do not require exclusion from group care as mildly ill children can safely attend if they are feeling well enough to do so. However there are instances when children must stay home! **Always check with the director to make sure it is okay for your child to return.** The following list of requirements will be followed for a child to return to school after exclusion from care:

Ring worm	Same day treatment starts and a Dr.'s note
Impetigo	One day after treatment and a Dr.'s note
Pink Eye	24 hours on medication and a Dr.'s note
Head Lice	After treatment bring empty box or receipt
Chicken Pox	Blisters are dried up and a doctor's note
Strep Throat	On medication for 24 hrs. and a Dr.'s note

Diarrhea	Must be free for 24 hours
Vomiting	Must be free for 24 hours
Fever (>101 )	Must be free for 24 hours

**\* Over-the-counter medication (i.e. Tylenol, cough syrups, etc.) will not be administered without a Dr.'s authorization. Authorization must come from the child's pediatrician.**

### **Staff**

The staff is the most important element in the successful operation of a child development center. They create the atmosphere and environment in which learning take place. The parents and the staff create a partnership to promote the well being of the children at the center.

Our staff consists of:

- ◆ Center Director
- ◆ Assistant Director/Curriculum Specialist
- ◆ Business Manager
- ◆ Child Development Teachers
- ◆ Child Development Program Assistants
- ◆ Child Development Cook

Inservice training is provided to encourage staff to advance to a level of competency consistent with the goals and philosophy of the center.

Inservice training consists of:

- ◆ Workshops and discussion groups in the areas of social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of young children
- ◆ Staff Meetings
- ◆ National Association for the Education of Young Children local affiliate group
- ◆ Individual or age-level discussions with education program specialists and program directors
- ◆ Providing a variety of books, phamplets and other reading materials
- ◆ Special consultant training classes

### **Fees**

Payment is due each Friday. Payments may also be made on a monthly basis. A \$15 late charge (per child) is also charged for returned checks. This payment is your commitment to the center that your child will attend daily and is our guarantee that a space will be available for your child (no mid-month withdrawals are permitted during December or May for the part-day preschool program).

In Order for us to plan effectively, a two-week termination notice is required, in writing. Tuition is based on the child's enrollment and not attendance. Therefore, parents are obligated to pay fees regardless of absences due to illness, inclement weather, or closure due to holidays. If the withdrawal notice is not received, charges continued must be paid.

#### **Miscellaneous fees include the following:**

**Late Fine:** \$20.00 for the first 10 minutes. Patrons are charged \$2.00, per minute there after, for children remaining in the center after the stated closing time or after the time for which hourly care has been reserved.

### **Snack and Meals**

Nutritious meals and snacks are provided for the children in the center. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are offered to children at the center longer than eight hours. Meals meet the nutrition and quantity requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ChildCare Food Program (CCFP).

Parents should supply only special foods (infant food and formula). Lunch is served between 11:00 and 11:30. The menu is posted near the reception desk. Parents must provide prepared infant formula, if needed. Infant food and formula that is prepared or provided by the parent should be dated and labeled by the parents with the child's name and feeding instructions.

**Please do not send treats (gum, candy, potato chips, and soda) with your children. Sweets curtail children's appetites for proper meals and snacks.** We strive to ensure only nutritious foods and snacks. Snacks are served twice daily, at 9:30 AM and 3:00 PM, and usually consist of fruit, crackers, raw vegetables, cheese or juice.

### **Diapers**

Only disposable diapers may be used unless a written doctor's not indicates an allergy. Parents must provide a sufficient number of diapers for children not toilet trained. Parents of children being toilet trained should bring sufficient changes in case of accidents. To avoid the problem of misplaced diapers, please label the box and the individual diapers.

### **Special Instructions for Infants**

An instruction sheet for infant care is provided at the reception area in the infant module. Parents are responsible for writing down any special instructions. A completed instruction sheet is required for babies with bottles or food. Please do not bring glass bottles to the center.

### **SIDS Policy**

All babies are placed in the cribs on their backs to sleep. This reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). If the child is able to roll over on his or her own, then they should be allowed to assume whatever position they move into for sleep either back or stomach.

### **Clothing**

Dress your child appropriately, according to weather conditions. Clothes should be strong and washable, as there are many activities in which a child may get dirty. Save good clothes for special occasions. Please bring a change of clothing for your child. If you are potty training please bring necessary clothing. (At least 4sets of changing clothes.)

### **Children's Personal Items**

The center is not responsible for children's personal items. Label items to prevent possible misplacement of your child's belongings.

### **Nap Time**

Children in the toddler and preschool rooms have a quiet time after lunch between 12 noon and 2 PM. To minimize disruption, plan to arrive or depart before or after naptime.

### **Toys**

Toys are provided for the children. We cannot accept responsibility for toys brought from home. If your child would like to bring a toy for a special occasion, please coordinate this with your child's primary caregiver.

### **Donations**

Usable toys, puzzles and books are always needed. If you have extras at home that your children are no longer using, please donate them to us.

Children's outgrown clothing can also be used by the center, as the children often have accidents and need to change.

For arts and crafts, we use scraps of material, egg cartons, oatmeal boxes, milk cartons, dress-up clothes, hats, popsicle sticks, felt scraps, wall paper, old magazines, thread spools and yarn.

### **Children's Work**

The children work hard during the day with many materials and are very proud of their work. Displaying and praising your child's work makes him or her feel good. Please check your child's work and notices daily.

### **Monthly Newsletter**

A monthly newsletter is published by the Center Association to inform you of upcoming field trips and events, projects the children are working on and other important information.

## **WAITING LIST POLICIES**

### **WAITING LIST PROCEDURES**

- A child that has been placed on the waiting list will be accepted into the center only when written authorization is received from the center director. This authorization will be given when another child meets the criteria to move to the next level and the parents have given their consent.
- You will be notified by letter when a position becomes available and to when your starting date will be.
- In most cases we know the anticipated starting date a month in advance.

### **WAITING LIST PRIORITY**

Children on the waiting list will be accepted into the center according to a priority list order. It is as follows:

1. **Children of employees of the Army Corps of Engineers**
2. **Children of Federal workers**
3. Children who currently have siblings in the facility
4. Children from the community



## **Confidentiality & Security Of Files**

Castle Kids will maintain confidentiality and security of our files.

1. The children's files will be locked at all times. Only the Director, office administration, and head teachers shall have access to the files.

All records are the property of the center and the Director, as custodian, Shall secure records against loss, tampering, or any unauthorized use.

2. Castle Kids will maintain confidentiality of all of the children's records. employees of the center shall not disclose or knowingly permit the disclosure of any information concerning the child or his/her family, directly, or indirectly, to any unauthorized person.
3. Castle Kids will obtain written informed consent from the parent prior to releasing any information or photographs from which the child might be identified, except for authorized state and federal agencies.

## **AGES AND ROOM GROUPINGS**

The children's rooms are broken up into an infant, younger toddler, older toddler, and pre-k rooms. The age ranges are approximated, expected ages that the child should be for placement in a particular group.

<b>Fish Room:</b>	6 weeks – 9 or 10 months
<b>Bear Room:</b>	9 or 10 months – 18 months
<b>Frog Room:</b>	18 months – 22 months
	22 months – 27 months
	27 months – 36 months
<b>Turtle Room:</b>	3 years – 5 years

## Child Care Checklist

- ❑ We encourage our parents to bring children to the center no later than 9:30 AM each day, unless other arrangements have been made. This helps us administer the program by scheduling the correct number of caregivers for the number of children. This also assures that your child will participate in planned field trips and special projects or events.
- ❑ Disposable diapers should be provided unless you have a written note from a doctor stating cloth diaper are necessary for your child. If your child runs out of diapers, the center will supply diapers, which you must replace.
- ❑ Please put names on each article of clothing you bring to the center. We cannot take responsibility for lost clothes. Each child must have at least one extra change of clothing. When children are being toilet trained, bring even more clothing changes, especially training pants.
- ❑ Take the time to remove your child's coat and other outer clothing and hang them up.
- ❑ Sign your child in and out in the daily log and add any information you would like the child's caregiver to know.
- ❑ Consider the weather conditions and dress your child accordingly. The children go outside daily, except in rainy weather.
- ❑ Preventive medicine, Medical Department Activity (MEDDAC), requires all infant bottles and caps to be clearly labeled each day with the child's name, the date and contents of the bottle.
- ❑ Parents must provide the prepared infant formula or baby food that the child requires.

## **CENTERS**

Centers are play areas suitable to the needs of children by allowing all kinds of play from solitary to small group cooperative play. Centers are age appropriate and managed by the teacher.

### **HouseKeeping Center:**

Home living area includes kitchen items; baby dolls and beds, cleaning items (brooms, mops) dress up clothes.

### **Block & Manipulation Center:**

Picture puzzles, insert puzzles, legos, construction toys

### **Music & Listening Center:**

Designed with earphones for listening, recording, read along stories and music. Also included: Rhythm instruments.

### **Library Center:**

Comfortable, cozy place with a variety of books.

### **Math & Science Center:**

Counting toys, containers for sorting and grouping, liquid measures, etc.

**Art Center:** A variety of materials for coloring, painting, and drawing. Etc.

The Caregivers in this program are especially warm and supportive and provide a stimulating atmosphere with an emphasis on individual growth and development.

YMCA Castle Kids Child Development Center is offered as a supplement to, not a substitute for, the family. Join us as a partner to help your child develop into an individual who has a concern for others, and an enthusiasm for life and learning.

Sincerely,

YMCA Castle Kids Staff

## **SCHOOLS OUT PROGRAM**

### **Ages:**

5-12

### **Dates:**

Thanksgiving	Week of Thanksgiving
Christmas	Week of Christmas and week After
Mardi Gras	Week of Mardi Gras
Easter	Week of Easter

A \$15 deposit is required to guarantee a space for your child. Please register for the program 2 days in advance, and notify the center if your child will not be attending.

The children will be going on scheduled field trips. **Parents need to sign and return the consent form.**

## PARENT STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

The following information is important for the safety and protection of your child. Please read the information, sign this form, and return it to the YMCA Child Care office.

Please keep and refer to your copy of YMCA Program Policies. Your signature below indicates that you have received them.

**I understand that YMCA and volunteers are not allowed to baby-sit or transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program.** The YMCA toward staff and volunteers will take immediate disciplinary action if a violation is discovered.

**I understand that I am not to leave my child at the YMCA or program site unless a YMCA staff or volunteer is there to receive and supervise my child.**

**I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person. Any person authorized to pick up my child must either be listed with the YMCA or other arrangements must be made by calling the YMCA office to inform them of a change.**

**I understand that should a person arrive to pick up my child who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, for the child's safety, staff may have no recourse but to contact the police.** Please do not put staff in a position where they have to make this judgement.

**I understand that state law mandates the YMCA, to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statues 14:403 to the local Child Protection Agency at (504) 680-9000.**

(Note: It may be appropriate for the YMCA to insert fees or other policy statements that need additional emphasis at this point.)

**I have received a copy of the YMCA Parent Handbook/Parent Policies and Procedures.**

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date

